




Lee Review

2664700 2009

A Literary Arts Publication of Lee University



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LEE REVIEW

Fall 2008 - Spring 2009

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Every fall, the Lee Review is flooded with submissions from Lee students in every genre, ranging from short fiction to visual art. The Lee Review is Lee University's only literary magazine to date, so the standard for selection is high. Each year the Lee Review staff selects what we believe to be the best of the best. Each submission is carefully considered by the entire editorial staff, and the submissions chosen for publication reflect our mission: to provide Lee University's campus with a variety of successful artistic endeavors.

This year, the Lee Review received several outstanding pieces of art, like the winner of this year's Editor's Prize, Jordan Eisenback's poem "Passing, Or To Come" (68) and Alexander Pedigo's cover photograph. David Pemberton's ironic tale, "Banquet in the Hay," depicts a young man's disastrous fate and the hunger for redemption (39). Anna Harris' non-fiction essay accounts her divided childhood spent in two contrasting cultures: Chengdu, China, and Seattle, Washington (21). In the photography category, Amber Harrison captured the haunting image of faith in the midst of disaster (36). Josh Renzi concludes the issue with an intriguing look at three of Lee University's premiere playwrights in an interview with Brittany Livingston, Linsey Retcofsky, and Leandra Webb (69).

After serving on the editorial staff for three of my four years at Lee, I have been lucky to witness the artistic talent of students of all disciplines. The aesthetics of the Lee Review change dramatically every year, but the quality of work remains the same. The Lee Review staff hopes you enjoy reading this year's issue as much as we enjoyed the opportunity to showcase the brilliant artwork that Lee students and faculty have to offer.

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Travis Franklin

PUNCH



THOUGHTS FROM A TENNESSEE COCOON

Cara Bain

Fireflies flutter,
electrify the night.
Crickets' melody floats
on pockets of sticky air.
Tennessee summer heat,
too stubborn to leave with the sun,
too reluctant to relent.
Even the cool sheets,
a cocoon too soon occupied,
now cramped with clammy air.
Still the constant zephyr,
the sweet solstice swoons,
sweeping over my face,
whispering pleasures of life,
pleasures of summer.

Before drifting away
on a cricket's sung tale,
another story settles in my ear,
summoning recollection—my own
days at Cherokee Circle,
sun bleached hair, bicycle fringe.

Exploring the mimosa,
bronzed body clambering,
resting in its arms,
outstretched. My bony fingers finding
its pods, patiently peeling husks,
bean by bean,
the entertainment of onlies.
Here awaken days of my own—
days of summer.

I quietly surrender
to the comfort of my own bed,
to the call of the cicada's tune,
and the cool wind's breath
mumbling sighs of a forgotten time—
uttering murmurs of childhood,
murmurs of summer.



PARACME

Kevin Brown

n.—*the point at which one is past one's prime*

According to the actuarial tables, it was when
I was seven, after which, my risk of death
increased exponentially. And perhaps it was at
that point, as Lori Mitchell and Julie Woods both
let me kiss them, and Kim Davis called my name
from her front yard so that I could come and play.

Or perhaps it was when I chased down
the quarterback from behind, helping our team
defeat our district rivals, making a second-
string safety whom no one knew was on the
team into a man whose name was sung
by Senior girls in the same way that the
Sirens tried to lure Odysseus into the rocks.

Perhaps it was my first job, the first major
account where I won accolades and awards
for my work, causing the big boss, like the
God who carved the commandments in stone,
to etch my name in a plaque that still

hangs in the halls where I once walked.

Perhaps it was the first house I was able to own, where I spent weekends weedeating, mulching, and mowing, but what really mattered to me was not the landscape, but my name on the deed, as if it were written in the Lamb's book of life.

What is more likely, though, is that, like Rip Van Winkle, I will wake up twenty years from one of these imagined zeniths, and I will return to a town that no longer knows my name. I will realize that a revolution has occurred while I slept. And I missed it all.



UNTO THE FOURTH GENERATION

Jordan Eisenback

It is not until the server brought out a tapas plate (complementary-included, of course, probably some sort of service charge) that Jack realized that perhaps he was a tad under-dressed. “I didn’t realize this was this kind of place,” he whispered to Jon as the server turned, still in earshot. There was a painfully visible bead of sweat resting gently on the ridge of his brow. His arms were folded across his chest and there were folds of flesh caught over the hocks. There was a large vein that traced its way over the forearm closest to Jon, suffocated between muscle and skin. As Jack drummed his fingers against his bicep, the vein bulged and snaked, shifting and squirming like parasite with surfeit of selection—an oversized trichinosis. He was slouched in his chair, one leg bent, one leg straight, probably resting his heel on the ground.

“Yeah,” Jon responded, mumbling, letting her walk away, spindly-legged, carefully balancing pitchers of Diet Coke and tonic

water. “Our server is ‘Hi, short for Hyacinth.’ I thought that might give it away. Seems like some sort of parody.” Perhaps satire would have been more appropriate –not important, Jack wouldn’t be interested in such distinctions. He ran his tongue over the front of his teeth, feeling the powder of plaque. Midmorning’s packed lunch was still wedged in his molars, compressed bread in between his eyeteeth and incisors. He could feel it now, extra-smooth film his tongue slicked over. Lips bulging from his press of tongue, his face swelled, gaining simian shape: jaw opening slightly, lips pursing as he probed with his tongue against the nugget of compacted flour that resisted him. He brought his hand to his mouth, covering it.

Jack smiled, “I would have thought you’d like that, seems to be of your stripe. What was that girl? Corinthia? Sounds equally Greek to me.” Jack’s arms were still folded languidly across his chest; they were well-tanned –a stripe of pale flesh like undercooked meat showed under his shirt-sleeve where his farmer’s tan began, or ended— and well-haired. (Here Jon wonders what a poorly-haired arm would be, perhaps like his own: pale pink, soft-blond down like a girl’s; perhaps it would be like his grandfather’s: a sleeve of



dark fur, ursine in its excess.) Jack scratched his cheek with a dirty fingernail, pivoting his elbow with self-assured grace, tracing over an invisible line on his cheek with almost mechanical precision and no wasted effort. He yawned, bringing his fist to cover his mouth. Shifting in his seat, he reached into his back pocket and pulled out a thick leather wallet, bowed out, stuffed with Lowe's gift cards and possibly low-interest credit cards. It's possible he tried to lay it quietly on the table, but the compact mass of it thudded against the spun polyester tablecloth. It lay, inert, bulging. A neutron star.

Jon didn't respond to Jack's gibe, merely slouched. He slid his right hand down his arm from the shoulder, surreptitiously unfolding his shirt-sleeve. And then the other. He scratched at the sparse three-day's growth on his neck. His elbows rested on the table, his arms tight to his sides in order to disguise the patches of sweat under his armpits.

He looked past Jack, over his shoulder, at the couple sitting behind him, trying to get a sense of place. He hadn't been aware of his surroundings on the way in, too busy carefully maintaining distance between himself and Jack as they followed their host. The

man was wearing a jacket, possibly herringbone, but he only had on a polo underneath, little sailboat half-showing on his chest. He was scooping asparagus tips into his mouth four or five at a time, using a hunk of bread to shovel them onto his fork; Jon imagined a squelch of softened spears as they met his cheek and lip. He was speaking with flecks of green and hollandaise still on his tongue. “Everywhere I looked was culture. Thousand year-old houses, cathedrals left and right. I spent four hours in the Tate while I was over there. It was amazing, the tower rising over the Thames. They’ve got about forty Rothko’s, just maroons and grays everywhere and he had this exhibition called ‘Cage’, just seven angled panes of glass that—”

Jon pulled at the collar of his t-shirt.

“Do you think you’ll come back and work for me next summer?” Jack asked –a bit too loudly, Jon thought.

“I’m not sure. I might try and get a job in Charlottesville, stay there.” He laughed, a puff of exhaled air, “work at Starbucks or something.” He scooped a fried calamari ring into his mouth with a piece of bread.



“You’re not going to be able to get a much better job than this. You’ve made about five bucks since we’ve been sitting here. I know I could get another grant, for more samples.” What could be better than hot summer days spent in strange towns, driving on back roads, shaking out clods of soil into buckets? What could be better than falling asleep in a motel with the television still on?

“I know, we’ll see.” He paused, studying his father’s face. “It’s not that I don’t like working for you, not having any expenses while I’m home is great. I just—” He brought his hand to his mouth, bit at the cuticle off his middle finger. There was a clank of china behind him and he turned his head.

Their server came back; it seemed like she was sashaying; her hips traced circles as big as rings. She didn’t smile, he was sure Jack would remark about that later. “Could it hurt?” was how he’d start his complaint, speaking too loudly for Jon to be comfortable. He’d probably tip her two cents, or maybe a nickel, reciprocity.

“Are the gentlemen ready to order?” Jon felt a burn bloom on his cheeks and creep down his throat and up his ears. Her lips were thin, pressed tight. She didn’t look either of them in the eyes.

“I would like the Vegetable Neapolitan,” Jon said, pronouncing the last three syllables too deliberately. He tried to smile at the end of this, but wasn’t sure if she noticed. Her hair swooped over the eye closest his. He took a sip of the fuzzy water, the taste was almost unbearable.

“And for you sir?” She turned to Jack.

“I’d like the roast duck.”

“And how would you like that, sir?”

Here Jack paused, smiling, brow wrinkling. He laughed, exhaling through his nostrils. “I’d like it cooked, please.” Jon brought his hand to his mouth, biting at the knuckle of his forefinger.

“Well done, then?” The server responded, brows furrowed.

“Yes, I want it cooked. Brown. Done.”

“Well, done it is,” she turned, briskly, flustered. Jon caught a glimpse of pursed lips, her face finally showing some color.

“I’ve never had someone ask me how I’d like my duck.”



Jack wondered, again too loud, at least to Jack's ear. He laughed, not unpleasantly. "I wonder if she's new." That's why they have those delineations: rare, medium-rare, medium, et cetera. To avoid brusqueness. Jon didn't meet his father's eye.

The diner behind Jon's head was cutting his meat now, some sort of steak. A bit too bloody for Jack's taste. There was an unpleasant scrape of metal on porcelain with each saw of the knife. He was gesticulating with his fork still in his hand, chewing the flesh with the back of his jaw. "I feel like it changed my perspective, living that long among a people not my own. I feel broad. It made me think about the values we have here: you know they bag their own groceries over there? And they don't use plastic bags either. It's brilliant. Sometimes I feel like abandoning this whole country—" He paused to pull another piece of meat from the fork with his teeth.

PARADISE CONTRIVED

Matthew Fisher

Far & tucked away
A dream comes to its perfect end
I wake to glimpse the morning side of day.

Frost-shroud windowglass
Obscures the toes & heads & napes
& lips emitting puffs of heat that float.

Each one a loving,
Living, locomotive: booted,
Capped, scarved, kissed. Bundled they trundle & trudge.

Cobblestone covered,
A wedding cake with buttercream,
As chimneys sing grey ballads to the sky.

Quilted savannah,
Patchwork pleasance, soft velvet stones
& hanging golden tassels: lustrous braids.



Subtle crackling, low,
A murmur, dancing blaze within
The gaping vast & yawning maw of brick.

Lately I tumble
off the coattails of a prayer
and lie between lucidity & sleep.

I am fully roused
by the entry of the one who
shatters the adequacy of this song.

I am awake now,
In this, my paradise contrived.
I see the truth in a featureless face.

I cannot without
Having have a depth as deep as
You: ruin of song, heartbeat, my fair hope.

One day perhaps we'll
Smile & sing and remember this
When we've abandoned being more than one.

Then, as I breathe in,
My favorite vessel will take
Me on shimmering glass tearfully back.

Our true history,
A lovin' song by One more fit,
Will break this & leave me thanking silence.



A TALE OF TWO WORLDS

Anna Harris

On my seventh birthday, I requested my two favorite foods for dinner: Kraft macaroni and cheese and Peking duck. In my mind there was nothing wrong with pairing the two dishes, one a cheap, from-a-box American staple, the other a rich Chinese delicacy. My mouth watered as I envisioned the cheesy pasta—fun shaped, of course—alongside the greasy, smoky tenderness of the duck, which would be served the traditional Asian way with its head still intact (picture the final scene from *A Christmas Story*). My mom raised her eyebrows but willingly complied, smiling as she set the table with both forks and chopsticks.

I can't think of a better way to illustrate the two worlds in which I grew up and my attempts to and reconcile them. Born in Seattle, I moved to China with my parents when I was only two months old. I lived the first few years of my life in Chengdu, a city known for its grime and smog, in the heart of Sichuan province,

which is famous for its mouth-numbingly spicy food. While my parents taught English at a nearby university, I spent my mornings and afternoons with my beloved Po-po, who took me on outings and completely coddled and spoiled me. When I was old enough, I went to school at the neighborhood kindergarten. I don't remember much aside from music time, when my teacher churned out tunes from a rickety old pump organ. I think I must have been about this age when I began to notice that I looked different from everyone around me. Whenever my parents and I were in public, everyone gawked at us, and perfect strangers clustered around to glimpse my blue eyes and finger my blonde hair. "*Piao-liang!*" (pretty) they'd comment on my Caucasianness.

I recall being put on a stage at the last minute with a group of girls from my kindergarten. We were all dressed in blue and white outfits and had red lipstick dots on our foreheads. It was parents' night and we were doing some type of dance involving oranges. But I hadn't learned the dance, and I felt incredibly awkward the entire time as I looked at the girls around me and tried to copy their movements. I couldn't understand why Chinese people were so



fascinated by us foreigners and why my teachers seemed to give me extra attention.

Grocery shopping was another event that always drew gazes to my mom, my tow-headed sister and I. Mom would wheel my sister's stroller through the narrow aisles at the neighborhood market and balance her bags on the handles. Everyone would stare; some people offered us candy and practiced the few English phrases they knew by calling out "Hello! OK!" I thought they sounded ridiculous. The market was a mixture of pungent smells and hawkers sold strange items like huge black mushrooms and ginseng roots. I always wrinkled my nose at the sight of raw meat hanging from hooks with flies buzzing around. The butcher would weigh the meat on an old fashioned hanging scale and grind it by hand in a filthy meat grinder. On one of our shopping trips I spotted a tall woman with long grey hair and light skin. "Look, Mom! An American!" I exclaimed, so rare was it to see a white person who wasn't one of our missionary friends.

And then there was life in America, where we returned for a short furlough every few years. I loved summers at my grandparents'

Tennessee farm, where I would walk around barefoot in the grass and pick up my cousins' Southern drawl. We did our shopping at Wal-mart where everything was shiny and clean and conveniently packaged. We went everywhere by car, not by bicycle or taxi like we did in China. And we looked like everyone else! But here I was different, too. Once people found out I was an missionary's kid from China they pummeled me with questions and demands of "Say something in Chinese!"

Yes, I was a part of two worlds. In one I longed to dye my hair jet black and wear sunglasses in public; in the other I wanted, like a participant in the Witness Protection Program, to keep my past a secret and to be normal. Ordinary. To blend in. When we moved back to Washington for an extended furlough, I enrolled in a private Christian academy. It was my first experience in an American school. Throughout that first year, I avoided telling people that my parents were missionaries. In fact, I was a little embarrassed by the fact. Here was my chance, I thought, to be average.

I loved America: it was cleaner, I looked and talked like everyone else, and there were libraries! We lived in a roomy house



with a huge backyard to play in; so different from the tiny concrete foreigners' compound we'd just moved from. But a squiggly journal entry from this period shows that I was not completely content:

"Today was awful. I miss all my friends in China."

People often asked me which I liked better, America or China. They might as well have asked me which of my feet was my favorite, right or left. Both were a part of me. I could never choose one over the other. I wanted with all of my heart to somehow pick up America and drop it in the center of China. Then I could live in both of my homes and have everything and everyone I loved in the same place at once.

In a way, I'd say that I began to go through an identity crisis. Who was I really? I'd always defined myself by where I'd lived, the cultures I belonged to. That's what had always dictated what I did and how I acted. In China I could spit wherever I wanted; in America that was definitely taboo. In China we had a nanny who cooked for us, cleaned up after us, and took my sister and me to the kiosk to buy bubblegum whenever we wanted. In America we had to keep our rooms clean and perform the duties on our chore lists.

I had always depended on my background to give me the assurance that I was special, and, although I often tired of being different, it could also be a good thing. But what if I had never been to China? What if I had only spoken one language my whole life? Would I still be unique? Did people really like me for me? What was my personality like, and did I even have one?

My mom always says that children under 12 aren't mature enough to be left home alone, that you don't get common sense until you're 21, and that it wasn't until she reached her thirties that she truly knew who she was and had confidence in herself and in God. I think I may have inherited that from her. I thought that after coming to college I would find myself; that once I knew my calling, my questions would be answered. However, while I've received some answers, I have also found many more questions. And once again I'm torn between two countries, two worlds. A country called "Home" and a country called "College." A world called "Adulthood" and a world called "Adolescence." Once again, the worlds are struggling inside me.



NORWICH STATE HOSPITAL

Carol Hays

I wanted to know what it was like inside. A vacant asylum, abandoned for twenty-five years, and there were rumors about a wrecking crew. I was going to investigate: left the Canon on the dresser, listened to Tears for Fears the whole drive. I circled the muddy exterior, found an outside door that caved after warning me to STAY CALM. I stepped inside; molding walls suffocated me with fractal patterns of chaos, Rorschach ink blots haunting my mind. One room held flaccid curtains hung like giant tongues, and I was scared to pull them back, anticipating the maggot-lined bodies that I might find. The end of the corridor shifted, and I crossed the vomitory of an exhausted theatre, the seats still glowing an unnatural red. I hadn't known about that, theatres in hospitals; but I was curious, asylum patients watching reruns of *The Brady Bunch*.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S DAUGHTER

Brittany Livingston

I spent those mornings perched
like a sparrow on a power-line,
toes clinging onto the fibers,
filaments, and feel of the faded
dark blue flatweave carpet.
One thrust and I'm propelled
into a world of white
mottled muslin and flashing
lights; startled, the sparrow
leaves the swaying line to return
home (and sitting, I pose
in stance that says "beauty
and grace") but not before flying
into your window where
the neighborhood cat finds
her lying, wings in disarray,
on your tiled porch. Sit up
straight. Chin to the right.



GIRLS I HAVE MET AT PARTIES

Lucas Miller

The quick gesture and lightening conversation

Of agreeing on every point

Competing stories

Attempting always to reach

The same conclusions

Your eyes, they glisten, in this

Dim light

Compliments, so drab, they

Ring unsung in my own ears.

Listening so hard

I missed that last thing you said.

Oh yes, the name

Does sound familiar only

I have lost the face.

Lost all faces for the moment

Only some semblance

That flicker of a smile

No, I really must be going.

Thank you, you are so kind.

Yes, again, sometime soon.

And off now

To sleepless dreams, endless night

The stars in the sky, hazy, warm

Heat radiating flashes

No storms coming now.

They are here, and have been

And will continue.



BUTTERFLY HOUSE

Amanda Panos

We reached out
our hands to pick
avocadoes hanging hidden,
pregnant, green under waxy leaves.
We rescued ripened
oranges nearly bursting,
juices boiling inside their skin
on our ninety degree August day.
We went to see the cheetahs,
danced in the butterfly house,
kissed in the cool darkness
of the reptile cave. We held
hands watching gorillas groom,
fed nectar to the lorikeets. You told me
about your dead cousin, Myell,
her name the call of a peacock.
Windows down, cigarette in your hand,
we stopped and ate sushi,
popped edamame between our teeth

and you licked green tea
ice cream off my lips.
Sunset colors of deep plum, pink
as the color of your tongue,
layered the sky as you
drove me home,
opened the door of cathedral glass,
and let my hand go.





Elisheba Bagrow

KEY



Chandra Berry

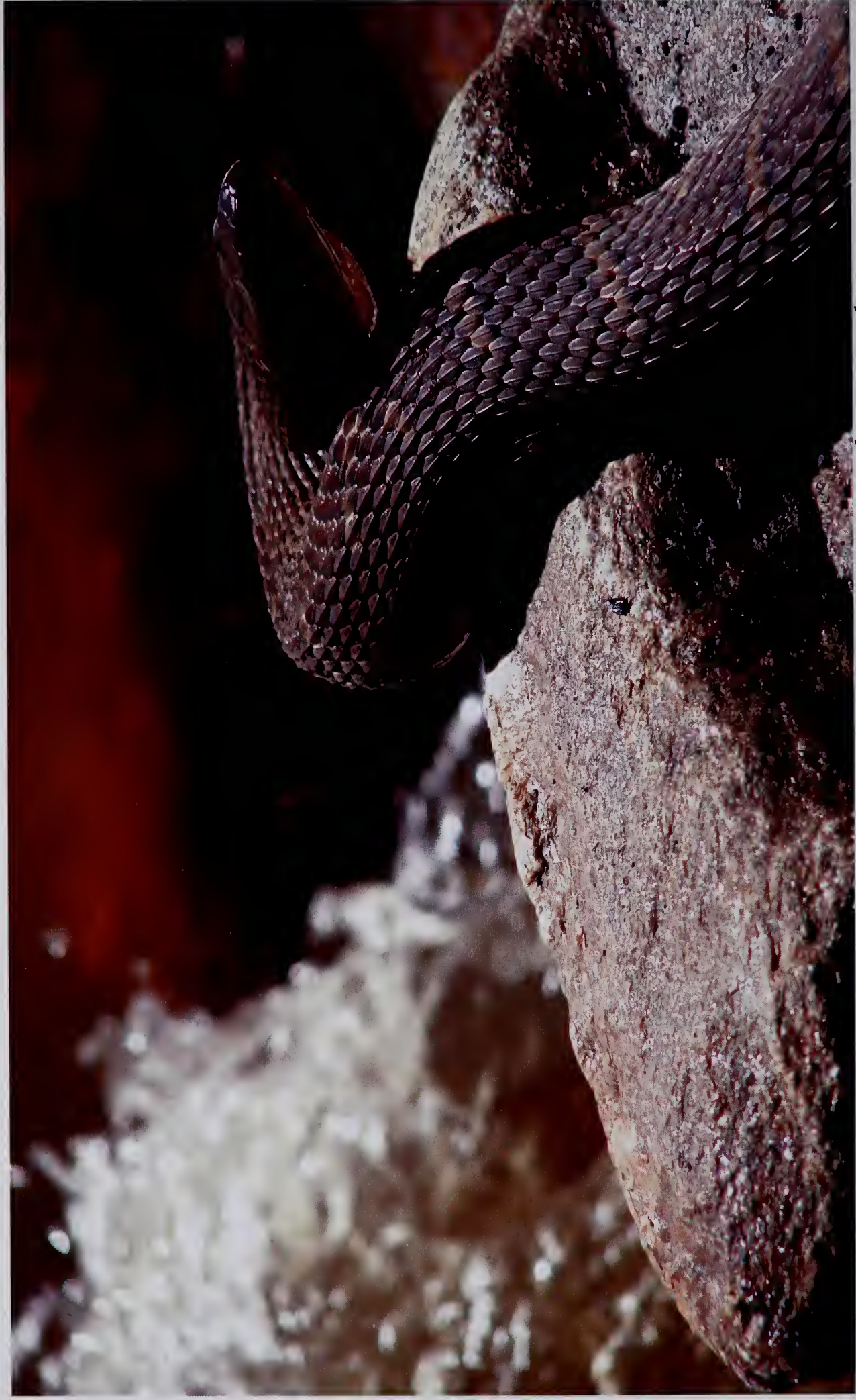
FISHBONE





Amber Harrison

FAITHFUL



Joshua Hughes

SNAKE AND RAPIDS





Jamie Miller

OCOEE PEAK



David Pemberton

FOX WATKINS



BANQUET IN THE HAY

David Pemberton

Vultures are scavengers, eaters of the damned. I saw two or three of them spiraling off in the distance. They aren't known to attack living animals, but will sometimes hunt down the wounded or sick, attracted by the smell of death, beaks salivating at the odor of ripe blood. Although I'm not sure if their beaks are able to salivate. They fly in a holding pattern above the carcass, or the soon-to-be carcass, waiting for it to become a carcass. This is called a kettle. They do this because they are mostly driven by the need to eat, like a raven or a hawk, staying in motion but constantly drawn to the same point. Vultures are very circular that way.

I read in one of my ornithology text books that vultures are immune to most poisons that dead bodies produce, like Botulinum toxin, one of the most poisonous naturally-occurring liquids. If any other animal were to ingest it, it would be paralyzed, suffer internal bleeding, convulse, lose vision and then die. It's used commercially

for rat poison because it has no taste, but sometimes it is also used for Botox treatments, ironically, to make old women look like they aren't dying.

I could see out of the corner of my eye a large black vulture perched on the limb of a tree which was bending and bobbing with the weight of the fat bird. He shook his neck wildly, waving his head back and forth, squawking, setting his plate at dinner. But vultures don't eat living things.

Ornithologists once stated that Botulinum toxin did have some effect on vultures, because they eat so slowly, unlike a raptor or harrier. But recent studies show that the vultures don't even notice it. To them, it's just another liquid like blood or sweat or tears or whatever else it is that they might eat. They don't even feel the poison. They just like to take their time eating.

I was flat on my back, breathing in deeply and with an annoying wheeze. My skin was paper-white, cut with steam rising from all the rips and tears and holes in my body, escaping to the evening glow of the blood-red sky. Pieces of my clothes were torn into my flesh, my ribs poking out of my blue cable knit sweater,



my knee bleeding through my jeans, my wrist bending around my shattered leather watch which stood still at six fifteen. If you viewed everything from the top, my body made something of a swastika shape. Or maybe a cartoon running man. My head was pointed towards the sky, with fresh and dark red blood pooling to the upper right of my frame. Maybe I was lying on a slight hill, or maybe it was because most of the wounds were on that side of my body. Or maybe my blood just wanted to go that way.

My right eye was swollen shut, if it was there at all, I can't really remember. My left eye remained open, looking around, darting back and forth from one vulture to the next. I was surrounded by leaves, a hollowed oak tree, a crooked fence made of rotten wood, and sun-light. But mostly, and I blame this on my position, I was watching clouds and vultures, or clouds of vultures, flying in a kettle.

They say it is rare for vultures to attack and eat anything that is still living. In a lecture once, Dr. Dreiberg explained that vultures have little discrimination when it comes to what they will and will not eat. Mostly, they tend to stay away from chickens, cats,

mice, small things whose bones splinter when broken. On that note, vultures are especially drawn to broken bones; somehow they can smell marrow from miles away. Dreiberg suggested that it was a natural instinct, the smell of marrow meant broken bones, the broken bones meant nothing could escape, meant it was easy. But vultures don't eat still living things, they say.

James had dragged me off the main road, into the middle of field of hay in an off corner portion of my parent's farm. But I don't think he knew it was my parent's farm. In all fairness, he might not have known it was a farm at all. The bus stop was about a mile away from the first hay field and when I came to visit I usually just walked the remainder of the distance. It was an accident, he was just passing through.

The shadows of the kettle were split up by the harsh angle of the low sun, like a car driving by your window at night, or when light shines through a fan, or when the doctor passes the flashlight over your eyes, mysterious and dangerous, a feeling of knowing and at the same time not knowing. A couple of short-eared owls flew over head, paying no mind to the vultures as they cast two smaller



shadows over me. I watched them pass, slowly, and formed my lips into a chapped smile, whispering a prayer. Owls are mostly solitary, living alone in the rotten trunks of trees, rarely even making contact with one another. On the rare occasion that owls are seen together, they are called a parliament. What struck me as odd about this, however, was that short-eared owls are an exception to the owl family. They aren't even nocturnal.

The owls moved on, as if nothing were happening, flying eastward towards the main road. The fingers on my right hand twitched, waving good bye to my new friends. At least, I thought, I was able to see something a little more pleasant.

Once the shadows of the owls were gone, the large circling figures above me grew, decreasing the circumference of their circle. The ground shook with a thud of a fat birds landing. Gawking at one another, the vultures waddled closer, moving with uncertainty, moving carefully, too cowardly to attack something so almost-dead. The bald and wrinkled head of a vulture draw into view, staring down at me as I stared up at him. I was still smiling, thinking of the owls. Vultures aren't known to eat still living things, but I figured

that maybe there was no real difference. I closed my eye and felt the warmth of leaving my body, giving up my ghost as the birds began to dine. My name was Jonas.

The owls flew on, past the fence and over the main road, casting their shadows over a powder blue hatch-back that was traveling below. James drove the car just over the speed limit, with the windows up, breathing out a strong bouquet of alcohol. Though it was dark, the blood on the hood of his car was still noticeable, and the crack in the windshield split his view of the road into several different fragments.

A cigarette hung limply in the side of his mouth, lit but unsmoked, while strands of velvet heat lifted and mingled with his tangled and grease-soaked hair, seeping deeper and deeper, engraving a smell of nicotine that couldn't be washed out. His knuckles were white; his yellowed fingers gripping the brown leather steering wheel of his car. His green eyes remained still, looking but not looking, reflecting the street lights that were lit as he drove, as day turned to night. James took the cigarette out of his mouth and held it between his index finger and thumb and in a flicking motion, tossed it at the



driver's side window.

The hot red bud bounced back off the glass and landed squarely back into James' lap. The fire-hot ash burned past the worn denim and into his white and pasty skin. He blinked into realization. Staring down in horror, he patted himself, hopelessly attempting to smother the heat in the palm of one hand. He stayed attached to the steering wheel, pulling slowly to the right, swerving the car between the empty lanes of the lonely dusk time road.

The hatch-back drove straight into a ditch that ran parallel to the road, just off of the road's shoulder. The car shook as it came to a forced park, rattling with the cold, hard earth. He sat for a moment, in shock at his current situation, moving his hands over himself, making sure that everything was where everything was supposed to be. He looked in the rear view mirror, reflecting back at himself a flash of green and black and white, staring at his bloodless face and specks of beard and lifeless skin. He turned the key over and over and over, attempting to start the car again, hoping to back out and continue on his way. With every grind of the starter, James closed his eyes and prayed, "Oh God, Oh God, please, I'm sorry, I'm

sorry...”

My father woke to the sound of birds, coming from just outside. There sat a parliament of owls, resting in a tree whose branches came almost within touching distance of the old glass and wood-framed window that looked down on the farm from Charles’ room. He sat up in bed and twisted his body towards the owls; letting his feet touch the hard-wood floor. He yawned and stretched, revealing the deep set wrinkles in his face that were clearly visible, only in certain lighting, such as morning. The sun-light gave his silver hair a platinum glow, and the early angled shadows defined his high cheekbones, showing off the one sixteenth Cherokee he always bragged about.

At the window, he peered out at the twisting branches of the old oak tree. He tapped on the glass and murmured, “Shouldn’t you be asleep?” Charles opened the window and leaned out a bit, straining his eyes, trying to see the brown birds against the brown branches. They were hooting just a few feet from the window, sitting close together. Charles backed himself into his room again and



began to look around, glancing from the book shelf to the bed to the floor, back to the book shelf, to the painting easel to the bed to his slippers, trying to find something heavy but not too valuable. Finally his pale blue eyes rested on a copy of *The Once and Future King*.

He opened the book and read the hand-written inscriptions on the inside cover: "Happy Birthday Dad, Love- Jonas." For a moment he hesitated with a slight frown, staring at the writing.

The pages of the book shook through the limbs of the tree, ejecting the two owls from their roost and forcing them into exile, towards the sky. Charles smiled and said, "Good riddance." He yawned and scratched his belly as he walked out his bedroom door, leaving the room with the window still open. Dad had always detested birds.

Charles' golden brown Sedan pulled out of the long and narrow driveway and turned left at the main road, driving along the same path that my mother used to run every morning before day break, before she broke. As Charles headed east towards the hay field, he noticed a large congregation of black flapping wings. He pulled to the edge of the road and rolled down the passenger

side window and leaned over the passenger's, trying to see what was going on. He only saw the flutter of black feathers, drifting from the ground like the ash of a dying fire. The sound of beaks slapping against dead flesh echoed in the field, the polite dinner conversation of a banquet in the hay.

The black wings fluttered around in commotion, distinctly outlined by the bright autumn leaves. Charles honked long-then-short-then-longer on his car horn, scaring the buzzards enough to send them into flight. Blood fell from their feathers as the large vultures flew off in several different directions, taking bits and pieces of their meal to entirely random graves.

Charles rolled up the passenger window. "Good Riddance," he said, still watching a few of the large birds flying in the same direction as he was beginning to drive. Made slow and sluggish by their meal, the vultures weren't able to glide far past the road. They landed on trees and broken fences, telephone poles and turned over trash cans, an abandoned blue hatch-back and shot-gun scattered road signs, and other pieces of Southern Americana.



James stumbled down the side walk, taking time to steady his hand against the abandoned brick buildings that lined the streets like tall and overbearing tomb stones. He walked slowly, bearing the weight of his body and bones and thoughts and memories. Cars drove by, large black wings flapped and landed, couples talked loudly on benches waiting on buses, waiting to take them somewhere else. But James was un-wavering, and he kept looking on to the corner store that was inside a gas station two blocks away.

The bell above the inside of the large glass door rang, signaling the apathetic cashier that a customer had entered. The young boy remained behind the front counter, barely nudging from his magazine, bored by his summer job that had bled into fall, grown deaf and numb to the sound of the door bell. James walked in, past the counter, paying the cashier a reciprocal amount of notice. The store was run down, comprised of three aisles filled with candy and condoms and beer, walls lined with adult magazines and coolers filled with energy drinks and more beer, weighing down the air with moisture and mold, pressing down on James' lungs as he breathed in the odors of this uncirculated linoleum hell.

As James slumped about, the cashier read an entire article on 20-guage shotguns specially designed for hunting doves. Of course, pigeons and doves are the same class of birds and in ornithology the names can be used interchangeably. Basically, a dove is just an albino pigeon. But, thanks to religion, white-pigeons are better respected and then, ironically, hunted, though they are just as filthy.

James cleared his throat, signifying that he wanted to pay for something. Sitting on the counter was a small blue box of rat poison and a tall cup of coffee. The cashier peered over his copy of *Guns and Birds*, eyes dull and dim, and said, "Will that be all for you today, Sir?"

"Yeah, just the coffee and this, that's it."

"Gotta infestation? That'll be six fifty, sir."

James handed the boy ten dollars, "Something like that." He placed the box in his pocket and took the cup of coffee in hand. He turned from the counter and walked deeper into the convenience store, towards the Formica tables and plastic booths that were littered in a claustrophobically small area crammed in a corner wall



between a slushy machine and a rotating hotdog grill, designated by a hanging sign just over head which read "Dining Room."

The boy leaned over the counter, yelling back at James, "Sir, you forgot your change. Sir, it's like almost five dollars. Sir?"

James slid into the closest booth with his back towards the front counter and his front towards the large window that looked out onto one of the town's two main roads, taking the blue box out of his pocket and placing it on the table in front of him while the coffee remained in his grasp. "Keep the change. You mind if I sit here with my coffee for a, for a bit?"

"Sure, I guess, I mean if— "

"—thanks, I appreciate it, I won't be long."

Dad sat in the hospital room with my mother, staring at her in a daze, listening to the drone of the machines that hooked into her body to keep her alive. He used to talk to her when we would visit, but now he was alone, without reason to speak, if no one would listen. His eyes moved up and down her body, looking

for something moving, but there was only stillness. Charles stood up and placed his hand on the sidebar of my mother's hospital bed. He usually would say "See you around, kiddo" before leaving, but instead he was only silent.

Charles' cheap black loafers squeaked as they bent with the curves of his feet as he walked over the rolled plastic of the hospital floor. He was heading for the elevator, passing windows that let in unnatural amounts of natural light in an attempt, by the designer, to brighten up the interior of the building. Instead, the sunlight only made the water mold stains that lined the floor more obvious, the illusion of the fake plastic potted trees all the more unbelievable, the eye level paintings of doves and children and angels all the more grotesque, the feeling of hope all the more illusory. Charles pressed the down arrow button. A painting of an angel leading two small children over a bridge stared at him from across the hall. The metal doors of the elevator slid open, and as he entered, Charles said, "Good Riddance" to the painting, stepping into the lonesome metal box.

He emerged into to the lobby as a large black woman behind



the admittance counter waved good bye to him, and he returned the gesture warmly with one arm, using the other to open the door that would take him out of the hospital and on to the street. He stepped into the sunlight and glanced at his parked sedan, sitting neatly where he had left it. Charles then walked into the middle of the road, towards the gas-station store that sat across from the hospital.

The hanging door bell rang, the young cashier remained listless, Charles waved hello and asked him how his studies were going. The boy responded curtly and Charles walked to the self serve coffee pot, pouring gulps of scalding caffeine into his non-degradable Styrofoam cup. He walked into the small and almost comically named "Dining Room," sitting at the second booth, facing the cashier's counter. Across from him, one booth over, sat a younger man with his head on the table, buried in folded arms, his long greasy hair resting dark across his sleeves, leading Charles' to see a half-drunk cup of coffee and an opened blue box stationed near his motionless head. Charles sat for a moment, watching the boy, sipping his own cheap, stale, tar-like coffee.

After a few moments, the young man gave a twitch, lifting his

head with a sneeze. Running down from his nose was a long crimson streak of blood. Charles chuckled, causing James to finally notice that he was in company, having no idea who Charles was.

“Long night, huh?” said Charles, as he stood from his booth and walked over to James, pulling a white handkerchief from his pocket. He slid the brown cotton of his khakis across the plastic seat and positioned himself across the table from James. Charles’ extended the handkerchief to James with a smile, “Here boy, take this. My name’s Charles.”

James remained slumped over, but took the handkerchief and cleaned his face of the blood. “James.”

“Well, nice to meet you. Haven’t seen you before, new to town?”

James paused for a moment, looking out the window at a shadow cast by another building upon another building. “I’m just passing through.” More blood ran from James’ nose, “I won’t be long; I’m not here long in this place.” The blood fell to the table, pooled a little bit and began to run towards Charles. Maybe the



table was at an angle, or maybe the floor was crooked, or maybe his blood just wanted to go that way.

“You go ahead and keep that handkerchief,” Charles said, “Looks like you might be needing it for awhile. I keep one with me, usually, round here my nose dries out too, when the seasons change.” James stuffed an end of the handkerchief into the side of his nose that was bleeding. “Sometimes out in the field I’ll be baling hay or tilling some kinda dirt and my nose will just start gushing. Doc says it’s something to do with the low humidity or something.” James pulled the end out, examining the blood stain apathetically. “I find though, during this time of year, that if I drink a glass of salt water, its an ol’ Cherokee trick, you know, that if I drink a glass of salt water in the morning then I generally don’t get a bloody nose, which don’t make no sense to me—”

“—Yeah, humidity.” James continued, glaring out the window behind Charles, his eyes now beginning to glaze, reflecting colors and shapes and suggestions of things, but nothing well defined.

“Course, I didn’t go to the doc just for a bloody nose, I was

just passing through the hospital and asked him about it—”

“—Course,” said James. Across the street, on one of the old brick edges of the hospital had landed two large vultures. They both peered down onto the street, free of emotion. “Just a bloody nose I guess.”

Charles turned, the kind of turn old men make when nothing moves like it used to, not twisting his neck but moving to see what was behind him. The street, the side walk, a trash can, buildings, shadows, shadows of shadows, weeds, vines, vultures, nothing in particular. Charles twisted his waist back around, facing James, “What’s a matter? You look like you’ve seen a ghost...”

James mouth grew wide and long and lean, lips stretched tight and twitching, holding back gasps of air. “A friend of mine,” James adjusted his eyes, focused on Charles, their glaze now reflecting him in a more definite shape “...well this guy I knew, he d-died recently.”

Charles burrowed his eyes slightly. Now that he sat at the same table as James, the image of the prostrate rat was clear on the



blue box, drawn with large black crosses over his eyes. “Oh I know death,” said Charles, “I know what its like to see friends die and have ta deal with that sorta thing and find the strength to go on. Death can be hard; I know that, yeah sure, death ain’t something none of us want to see. My wife,” Charles sipped his coffee, now moving his eyes back to James, “she’s been dying for six months now. Been in some kinda coma. Doc says it’s just a matter of time.”

The glaze over James’ eyes now resembled clouds, casting an opaque white over his pupils. A vision of Charles was almost mirror reflected in James’ eyes.

“My son was supposed to come up this weekend to see her. Hasn’t seen her in a month or so, says we should pull the plug. Says Tiffany would want it that way. He and I got in a fight over it, yelled at each other; I said to him, I said that if there was any hope we had to take it, you know? He said she was in pain, trapped, and it was selfish of me to keep her around like that...”

James began to shake slightly, like someone who was cold.

“I’m just s-so sorry...”

“Well damn, I’m sorry too, I haven’t talked to my son much since he left, the last time I saw him, when we fought. I guess we both got so mad at each other cause we both love Tiffany so much, I know that and Jonas knows that too, hell, we both know it,” Charles glanced back at the blue box. “We both have accepted that she’s gone, just not ‘when,’ you know? I guess it’s a fool’s errand to cling to the dead, to worry about what we’ve already lost. We gotta go on livin, you know? No matter how much it hurts. We can’t carry the weight of the dead around with us; they wouldn’t want it like that. No matter how much it hur—“

Charles was cut off by a vast explosion of noise directly behind him. He looked around himself and through the large glass window. The street, the sidewalk, a trash can, buildings, shadows, a vulture, all bisected by a long opaque strip of midnight red running from the bottom of the windowsill and reaching to the upper end of the glass, punctuated by a collision splatter with extending glass cracks at it’s beginning. Charles remained turned from James, sliding from the booth and approaching the window with quick and breathless steps. His eyes where wide and unblinking, his mouth



gapped, his eyebrows angled. Charles placed a furtive hand on the window, and leaned in to peer outside. There, on the sidewalk lining the store, rested a long pink neck, bending in too many directions, poking into a ruffled mass of black silk feathers, swimming in a sea of fresh crimson, twitching slightly with the movement of a body that hasn't yet figured out it is dead.

“My God,” Charles said “...the damn thing flew straight into the window, musta been at full force, killed it right here on the sidewalk. Broke its neck. Bad Omen, the Cherokee might say...”

James was silent.

“Did you see it; did you see it flying at the window? Musta come from up there where that other buzzard was sitting.” Charles twisted back towards James, “I aint never seen anything like this—” The plastic booth was now empty, the Formica table left bare save the blue box and two cooled cups of coffee. He stepped forward, shifting where objects in the room sat in his perception. James convulsed on the floor next to the table, his eyes rattling with the violent contortion of his body moving in fluid pain, choking on blood and sweat and tears, crying. Charles took two quick steps and

collapsed at James' side, sliding on the plastic floor, bumping into James' body. He grabbed hold of James' hand and held down James' chest with his free arm, hoping to stop the shaking.

The cashier stumbled for the phone, frantically dialing the same three numbers over and over again.

"I-I'm sorry," James choked through foam, trying hard to speak, babbling to Charles, "Please f-forgive me y-you have to f-f-forgive me. S-someone has to f-f-f-orgive m-me."

Charles embraced James, tightly constricting him. "Please get an ambulance! For Chrissake get an ambulance! The hospital is right there! He's just a kid!"

James' hand squeezed tightly on Charles' "P-p-please...F-f-orgive me..."

"What did you do? Oh Lord, it can't be this bad..."

Charles lifted the upper part of James' body off the floor, dripping tears on to James' slowing frame, mouthing something of a prayer, squeezing and squeezing until James stopped convulsing and, with a choking gasp, fell silent. The door bell of the store rang as the



cashier boy ran out, abandoning the phone for the sound of his own voice, screaming at the hospital as he ran towards it.

Charles sat there, clinging to James' body, thinking of Tiffany in her hospital bed and wondering if she would shake when the cord to her life support were removed, if her death would be so violent. He stayed with James, repeating, "I forgive you" over and over but without knowing why, waiting for an ambulance or a doctor or someone to take the weight of the dead body away.

AS ONE PLUNGES FROM THE SKY

Chad Prevost

—for Larry Levis

He re-loads, and keeps his eye on the falling
Starling, even from so far away—
His miracle eye and steady hand
Squeezing the trigger gently as a thief
Opens a bedroom door. The retriever
At the path's edge ready to spring
Upon command. He feels nothing
But the silence, only wants to stop
Whatever moves, even the startled
Songbird now plummeting
Like an October acorn, past a blurred
Billboard over State Road 78,
The Marlboro Man, lasso in hand,
Staring introspectively
Upon a vast ranchland in the Republic
Of Nowhere-in-Particular, California.
He no longer remembers this bliss,



No longer recalls becoming a man,
Slipping into the river's long refusal
To do anything but sing. For all he knows,
The man, forgotten in the ecstatic
Silence, was his father, and he the dog.
The starling, a mere black hole,
A shadow lapsing across the sky's
Imperfect canvass. He skids down the cliff,
Eyes lifted upward, as if daring the dead
Weight of the sky to fall and crush him
Into a sweet and featherless oblivion.

THE UNTOLD STORY OF A SILOUETTED OLD MAN...

Joshua Renzi

Snagged by thickets and brambles entwined,
vines and roots tangle and twist coupled
with the hollow thump of an old man hunched
limping on his stiff leg, his walking stick held
fast to his side, wiping sweat from his brow.
With thorn tattered clothes and a determined face,
crunching leaves and twigs he trudged up the hill.
The autumn air breathes death on the forest life,
he knew when he set out only water would do,
for he knew this journey was to be his last.
Light began to spill through the gaps in the brush,
the smell of the salted air brought him to his knees.
He scrambled up the knoll and through the clearing,
his crinkled eyes began to water as they were filled
with the sight of a derelict cottage made of stone
overlooking the sea where waves crashed against
the jagged cliff, his walking stick abandoned.



He used to live here, long ago with his beautiful wife,
full of color and spontaneity. Tears stream into the lines
of his cheeks as his memory floods his aching heart.
She died some time ago, in his arms, by an untold illness.
With feeble hands clutching the grass, he simply wept.
Upon dusk, he crawled onto the porch and into an old wooden
rocking chair. He died that night, the wind still sweeping his hair.

FATA MORGANA

Jon Tully

For all I know you are a reality
A mass of flesh and bone like me
Tangible upon a bed of dreams not
A wraith or phantom from beyond

Maybe my senses betray me
Or my heart sees with blinded eyes
Replicas of the truth, mirages
Gone and since returned
Anew in protean form
Never would I trust that you were just
An illusion.



PLACE WINNER

JORDAN EISENBACK

PASSING, OR TO COME

PASSING, OR TO COME

Jordan Eisenback

There was, once, last time, an instant
not of clarity perhaps, but brevity
when I couldn't doubt the pluck of distance felt
the resounding clack of home purloined.

There are whole ages, epochs, when
the slope of the hill: the crest; the cusp;
the rise of line;
is the length of hemispheres
not the Indies, east or west,
but the nexus, the nadir where longitude begins.
Over which I'd travail.

It's impossible to know, to verify, except by shift
whether of pressure, or weather, or tread of tire
when the line moves from played out to drawn in
tugging at, perhaps, my wrist, or arm, or chest
pulling,
threshold-seeking

I'd prefer not to leave, or
I'd prefer to stay





Leandra Webb

Brittany Livingston

Linsey Retcofsky

“Empowerment:” a word used to encompass the documentary play currently being undertaken by three of our own undergraduate students. Brittany Livingston, Linsey Retcofsky, and Leandra Webb, three prominent students in the Writing department, are working together to compile and transcribe ten interviews from women who were victimized by domestic abuse. With Ms. Stacey Isom, a professor of Creative Writing as well as a published playwright, serving as their mentor, the team hopes to capture the power infused within the women’s stories. “The stories are about women who have survived and overcome,” says Isom. This interview was conducted in person during the spring semester.

Josh Renzi: What, in your opinion, is the project about? Or rather, what is the focus?

Linsey Retcofsky: Initially, we were told that it would be a grant that funded research on domestic violence victims. We are

essentially writing a documentary play taking interviews and crafting them into monologues. None of it is fictional; the entirety of the project is based on what they [the victims] say. We are still in the process of determining the various themes in the play, but it's about the victims and their experiences.

Brittany Livingston: I think for me, it's about the individual. The project's focus is very much what these women have gone through; it's their story. When you write a documentary monologue, you don't fictionalize any of it or as little as possible, so it is really about them, their story, and their life: something you would never otherwise hear about in a play.

Leandra Webb: In broader terms, it is bringing light to the subject of domestic abuse: an issue that I think definitely needs to be tackled. This project will help inform an otherwise uninformed audience and hopefully break some of the stereotypes associated with domestic violence.

JR: How is the process of conducting interviews and gathering research for this project? Do you find any struggles with it?

LW: Well, the interview process has been kind of difficult, as far as setting up the interviews and actually getting them done. They come in bursts because the women are essentially volunteering their stories, so we have to wait on their terms for when they are ready to share.

BL: One of the other problems is due to the fact that it is domestic violence and it is these women's stories; this is very close and personal for them, so you have to be very careful about how you phrase questions and the way you talk to them because you don't want to bring up too many bad memories. It is hard for them to



have to go through it all, but it is a fine line between getting the interview and causing more pain.

LR: This process has confirmed something that I believed about story: story is empowering. It is a gift, and it is something that we should use as often as possible. The women we've talked to have been through counseling and have already started to heal from this. The more the women tell their story, there's a catharsis in that. Also, hopefully there will be someone who sees or reads this play, and they'll know that it's okay to tell their story.

JR: How has this project helped you develop as a writer?

LR: One thing I've been working with, in the monologues, is something that Brian Silberman said at the Writer's Festival: it's not just enough for the character to tell a story because the essence of theater is dramatic conflict. There has to be a present conflict, which has been hard for me to find because, in a way, it is past tense. In telling this type of story, you have to tune in to these tiny, subtle details that they convey because we're not allowed to ask much. We're allowed to ask what's on the paper and restate what they've said or ask them to elaborate. We can't find metaphors easily, so finding that present conflict has been difficult. What are they still struggling with? You can't write that in for them, even if you have an idea of what they're still struggling with. We want to do them justice.

BL: What's really helped, when interviewing someone, is having the person there with you to look at and base things off of. They're not in your head, so it makes it easier, in a way, because there's your character right in front of you. It's actually a practice of watching people, watching their mannerisms, watching how they talk, what

they're wearing, and their body language. Once you've seen that, you can bring that to the character later. In essence, seeing a person in real life has helped me as a writer to translate that to my other fictional characters.

LW: I have come to appreciate that whether or not you're writing about an actual person, you're responsible for representing real people and how they truly act. You don't want to add any bias; you just want to be as objective as possible. Also, I was impressed by the element of research that goes into playwriting. It strengthened my ability in knowing when to look something up when I didn't know it, or when I needed to verify the truth to avoid lying in my writing.

JR: Finally, how is the process of writing as a group as opposed to individual writers?

LW: Accountability is a part of it because you think: Oh, well they already have this much of a draft done; I need to do that too. Essentially, we are encouraging each other. This is really delicate information and a controversial subject; having multiple people there makes it feel like a support group. While being in the room and hearing these stories, the atmosphere is very heavy. You feel the weight in the room of this burden they carry, so to be able to share this burden with each other and not have to take it on individually is consoling.

LR: I feel like we are comrades. We're in this together. We haven't gone through what these women have gone through, so it's a strange place to be in, listening to them. It's almost as though they're confessing something to you and it's your secret to keep. They're trusting you with their story, and that's huge.

BL: I like the group mentality because this is weighty material.



Just knowing that we're all going through it at the same time is comforting. It's not your story, but as a playwright you take on their story, and it becomes a lot more personal to you. I think as a playwright we get more affected by these stories emotionally, so having everyone in the group and knowing it's the same for them is encouraging.

CONTRIBUTOR'S

Elisheba Bagrow was born in Germany, lived in Okinawa, Tennessee, and Florida, and traveled to Singapore and South Korea. She is a history major and is not sure what she is going to use it for, but that is okay with her. She loves the great outdoors, cheese, and creativity. Photography is something that she will always do, whether it turns into a profession or not.

Cara Bain currently serves as the Resident Director of Sharp Hall. She completed her BA in Psychology at Lee in 2004 and her MS in Mental Health Counseling in 2008. *Thoughts from a Tennessee Cocoon* was inspired by her childhood spent in rural Eastern Tennessee.

Chandra Berry is an advertising major from Sevierville, Tennessee. She will be graduating in Dec. 09. In her spare time she loves taking photos of random things and is currently working on a graveyard series which features dead animals. She plans on opening up a photography studio/gallery as soon as she graduates.

Kevin Brown is an Associate Professor of English at Lee University. He has published poems and articles in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Academe*, *REAL: Regarding Arts and Letters*, *The Clergy Journal*, *InsideHigherEd.com*, *Jeopardy*, *Pinyon*, and *The Pacific Review*, among other journals. He is the inaugural Spotlight Poet at *gtwentytwo*, a new online journal. His book of poetry, *Exit Lines*, will be published later this year, as will a book of scholarship: *They Love to Tell the Stories: Five Contemporary Novelists Take on the Gospels*.

Jordan Eisenback is a senior English major at Lee University.

Matthew Fisher graduated from Lee in December 2008 with a degree in English and education. He plans to pursue a master's degree in creative writing.

Travis Franklin thinks that sometimes we're happy, sometimes we're sad, and then those times exist in which we just feel like punching something--like a



scanner in the Walker Memorial computer lab. ATTENTION: No scanners were harmed in the making of this picture.

Anna Harris is a senior writing major and xenophile. She enjoys dabbling in the kitchen, making collages, and reading children's literature. Her new favorite word is "zygodactyl".

Amber Harrsion is a student at Lee University.

Carol Hays is a sociology major who thoroughly enjoys reminiscing, drum circles, calloused hands, dance parties, and breaking social norms. She thanks Dr. Prevost for his wit, encouragement, and passion throughout the class that started her love affair with poetry.

Joshua Hughes is from Richmond, Virginia, and is a senior at Lee planning to graduate in May of 2009. He has spent much of his time writing and doing photography in the outdoors, much of the time in the midst of being on the river fishing. The outdoors have been one of the most inspiring places for him intellectually, spiritually, and physically and has helped him lead to the interests he has today.

Brittany Livingston is a junior who enjoys writing, bright colors, and recreating 80's attire.

Jamie Miller is a senior English major. She is looking forward to grad school in Scotland and dancing along the cliffs of the Highlands. She thanks her mom and aunt for always believing in her. She is part mermaid.

Lucas Miller is a senior history major from Cleveland, TN. He likes to read poetry.

Mandy Panos is a senior psychology major at Lee University. Mandy aspires to pursue a career as a neuropsychologist as she is able to better the lives of those with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). As a survivor of TBI, many of her inspirations for poetry arise from her experience and recovery.

Alexander Pedigo is a freshman and has loved and enjoyed all types of art since he was a child. Photography has been his biggest passion. he plans to eventually attend the Savannah College of Art and Design.

David Pemberton pretends to write and take pictures often. Luckily, he has fooled several people.

Chad Prevost is the author of three collections of poetry, and has co-edited two anthologies. He is the Co-Director and Editor of C&R Press, and taught at Lee University from 2004-2009. *As One Plunges from the Sky* came spontaneously after reading most of a 600-page anthology on and about the late great Larry Levis (*A Condition of the Spirit*), as well as several collections of the poet's own work, most notably, *The Dollmaker's Ghost* and *The Widening Spell of the Leaves*. Chad's experimenting with the more formal quality of the capitalized first letter of each line is a stylistic feature that runs throughout Levis' work.

Joshua Renzi is a writing major at the University of Lee. He enjoys dying his hair various shades of pink and proudly sporting his very macho Little Foot tattoo. Joshy's favorite pasttime is facebook stalking and flair attacking.

Jon Tully is a graduating English education major. the future holds very little certainty at this point, but writing will be one mainstay in whatever form it takes.



